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*R. E. Weston*  
with the respects  
of A. A. Connelley

*R. E. Weston*  
*R. E. Weston*

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ADDRESS

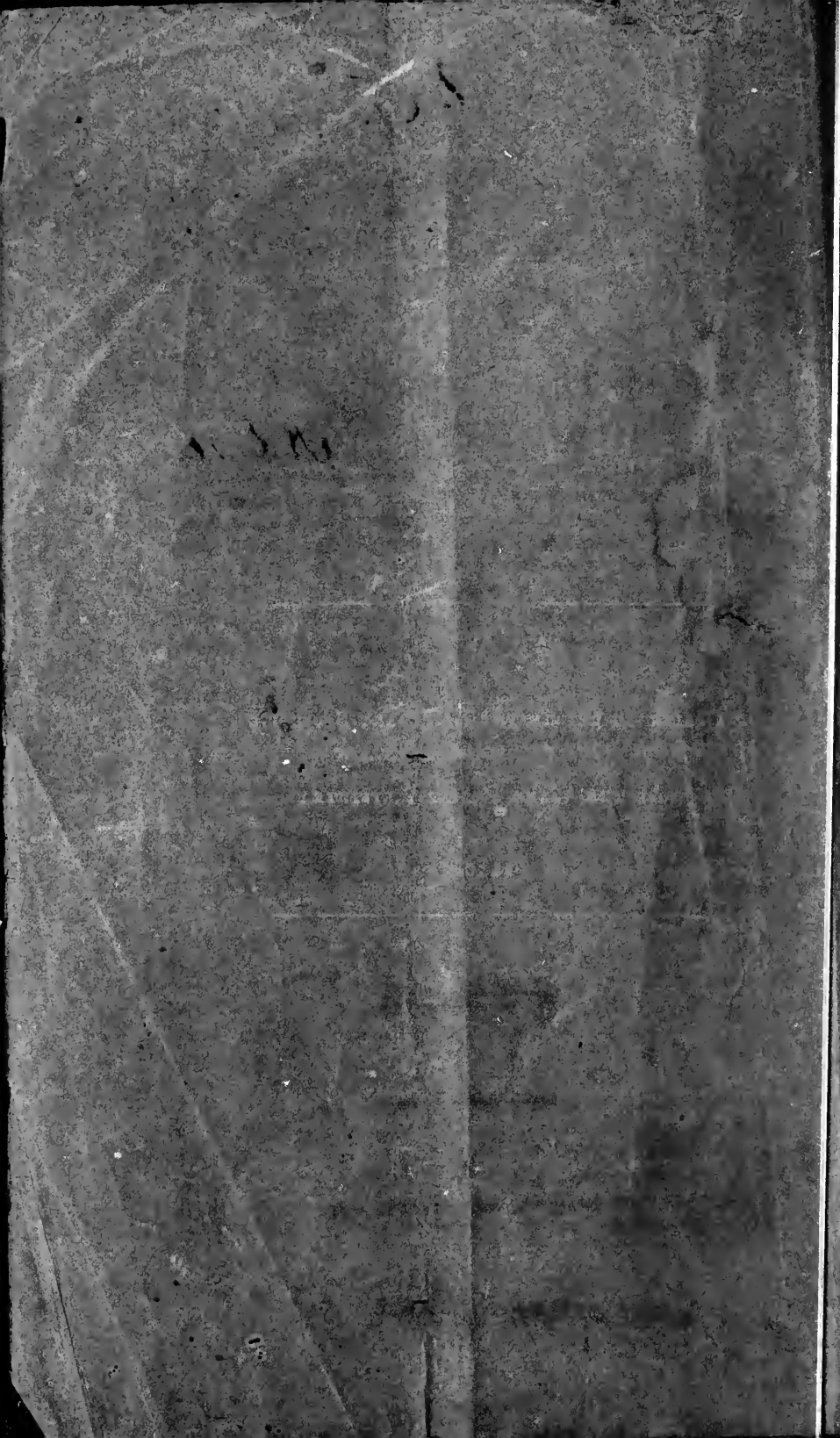
DELIVERED BEFORE THE LITERARY SOCIETIES

AT THE WARE FOREST INSTITUTE:

1836.

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*Meritt*



# ADDRESS

DELIVERED BEFORE

## THE LITERARY SOCIETIES

AT THE

WAKE FOREST INSTITUTE,

NORTH CAROLINA,

Nov. 24th, 1836:

✓  
BY T. MERDITH.  
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W NEWBERN:

PRINTED AT THE RECORDER OFFICE  
1837.

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WAKE FOREST INSTITUTE, NOVEMBER 25th, 1836.

REVEREND AND DEAR SIR,—

At a called meeting of the Philomathesian Society last evening, the following resolution was unanimously passed; viz.

"RESOLVED, That this Society is highly gratified with the appropriate address of its honorary member, the Rev. Thomas Meredith, before the two Societies; and that our Committee be instructed to tender to Mr. Meredith the thanks of this Society, and to request a copy for publication."

With high considerations of respect,

JAS. C. DOCKERY,  
JOSHUA J. JAMES, } COMMITTEE.  
E. F. JOHNSON,

REV. T. MEREDITH.

WAKE FOREST INSTITUTE, Nov. 25th, 1836.

GENTLEMEN,—

It is a source of much gratification to me, to know that the address alluded to in your communication, has received your approbation and that of the Society of which you are members; and as I am aware of no sufficient reason why your request should not be complied with, I need only say that the manuscript shall be at your disposal.

With much respect, &c.

T. MEREDITH.

JAS. C. DOCKERY,  
JOSH. J. JAMES, } COMMITTEE.  
EDWD. F. JOHNSON,

## ADDRESS.

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YOUNG GENTLEMEN,—

In addressing you on the present occasion, I shall submit a few practical thoughts, designed to facilitate the pursuits in which you are here engaged. Your object in coming to this place is, or should be, to lay the foundation of a substantial, useful, and accomplished education. Accordingly, every thing calculated to favor the attainment of this object—every thing tending to impart pleasure or success to your studies, or serving to excite to increased effort in the acquisition of knowledge, must be more or less worthy of your attention. And although I can certainly promise you but little, yet I trust that my motive will be duly esteemed, and that my attempt will not be wholly unsuccessful.

The importance, the practical value, of a first rate education, though essentially fundamental in a discussion like the present, is a topic on which I shall not now insist. Indeed if this were deemed requisite, I have not the time at command to do the subject justice. I shall therefore content myself with presenting a few considerations, which are apt to operate as *discouragements* to the student on the one hand;—and a few which may be regarded as matters of *encouragement* and *improvement* on the other.

Of the former, perhaps the first in the order of time not less than in the magnitude of its results, is a supposed *want of talent*—an imaginary deficiency in the gifts of nature. I can conceive of nothing more chilling to the ardor of a youth eager in the pursuit of knowledge, than to see himself easily outdone by his inferiors in point of advantage. And yet this is a mortification to which many are subject who are by no means wanting in intellectual endowment. This apparent deficiency may be owing to various causes. It may be owing solely to the defects of early education. It may be an evil growing out of misapprehension respecting the use of books and the most eligible modes of study. It may be owing to the defects of a weak and undisciplined memory. And it may arise entirely from tardiness of development on the part of the natural functions. But in all such cases, the evil, however discouraging, is by no means irremediable. Diligence and perseverance will, sooner or later, overcome it. The defects of early education may be supplied. Erroneous method in the order of study and in the use of books, may be corrected. The memory may be improved. The powers of intellect, where they exist, may be elicited and matured. And the delays and discouragements of youth, may be more than compensated by the renovated vigor

and the splendid acquisitions of later years. As conclusive proof of this I need only mention the well known fact, that the most unpromising childhood is often succeeded by the most brilliant attainments in mature life: while, on the other hand, those farthest advanced at the outset, are often left farthest behind in the end.

Let me not be understood to say, however, that there are no instances in which talent is really wanting. Nor do I mean to say, that where talent is wanting, the defect can be supplied by application. What I say is, that the most untoward indications in early life, are no necessary proof that nature has failed to do her part; and, accordingly, that such indications, however mortifying, should never be allowed to cool the ardor of youthful enterprise, nor to weaken the energies of virtuous ambition. Let every one therefore who imagines that nature has been frugal in his behalf, redouble his efforts. And for his encouragement, let him bear in mind the well known case of Demosthenes, who, notwithstanding his manifold deficiencies in the endowments of nature, gradually surmounted every obstacle, and eventually rose to a point of pre-eminence, perhaps unequalled by succeeding generations.

Another source of discouragement not unfrequently to be encountered, is a *want of taste* for study. This is sometimes the effect of downright indolence; but it is more frequently to be ascribed to the defects of education, and other similar impediments in the way of successful effort.—No one can find pleasure in pursuits in which he meets with no success. But be the cause what it may, the evil is a real one; and one which, if not seasonably overcome, must be followed by disastrous consequences. If success in any pursuit be essential to the existence of a taste for such pursuit, so on the other hand, there can be no lasting or valuable success where there is not a taste—a keen and insatiable appetite for the object or exercise pursued. No artist ever yet distinguished himself in his department, who had not a fondness for his occupation. And no student ever applied himself to his books, to any valuable purpose, so long as such application was a task. Let a man become an enthusiast in his profession, and eminence is almost certain. So let the student repair to his studies with the eagerness with which he repairs to his meals, and rapid advancement will be the consequence. The philosophy of this is obvious. What is done with pleasure—as a means of gratification—is sure to be done well. And what is done well—with becoming attention and perseverance—is nearly certain to be attended by success.

Let no one despond, however, because he lacks this essential qualification. The errors and defects of rudimental education, may be overcome. Perseverance, while it leads to the formation of salutary habit, will also surmount the obstacles which lie in the way. And as the impediments to success are surmounted, and the habit of application becomes easy, difficulties will vanish—that which was at first unsavory, will become

pleasant to the taste, and that which was thus a labor and a trial, will eventually become the means of gratification and delight.

Another source of discouragement—I should rather say perhaps of indifference—is an *improper estimate of the value of education*. There are some in every school, and perhaps in every class, who have fixed upon a course of life, in which it is supposed that the advantages of a scholastic education, are just about nominal. Of what advantage, it is often asked, are Latin, Greek, Algebra, and the like, to a farmer or a mechanic? This habit of depressing the value of education—and more especially this practice of pursuing it without reference to its utility, can never fail to produce their effects. He who pursues an object merely as a thing of nominal value—as a mere matter of ornament or convenience, will never pursue it with much interest or much success. He who studies Latin, Greek, and Algebra, with no idea of giving them his attention, or of making them useful in subsequent life, will never study either with much pleasure or with much profit.

The appropriate remedy for the evil of which I now speak, is a consideration like this:—No man can tell how or where his lot may be cast. Nothing is more uncertain or delusive than human calculations in regard to the future. “Many are the devices of a man’s heart, but the counsel of the Lord that shall stand.” In a large majority of cases, the course of human life turns out vastly different from what was planned and expected in the palmy hours of youth. Thousands have blessed God, amid the vicissitudes of real life, for the scanty education acquired without their concern, and perhaps without their consent. While multitudes have cursed the folly of their youth, for having neglected opportunities which might have been freely enjoyed and successfully improved. Be assured, young gentlemen, you know not what lies before you. Of the sober realities of this world, give me leave to say, you can now scarcely form a conception. Where you at present see only gilded palaces and enchanted castles, in all probability you will find ruined hopes and blasted expectations; and instead of commanding the treasures of the rich or the titles of the great, you may have a pressing demand for all your resources both of body and of mind.

Having adverted to some of the circumstances which are liable to discourage the student in the pursuit of knowledge, I shall proceed in the next place, and more particularly, to call your attention to the means of attaining the object in view—to those practical observances which are indispensable to successful effort in the acquisition of learning.

And here, at the outset, I must be allowed to insist on a point, which can never be insisted on too much. It is this: Whatever you learn, be sure and *learn well*. It is an easy matter to go ahead. Of reading books, as well as of making them, there is no end. Nothing is more convenient, or more common, with a dull or indolent student, than to permit himself to be dragged along by his class—to slip over dark and difficult points,

with the hope of finding things more easy as time and study advance.— But if this method has its conveniences, it has also its inconveniences; and I must add, its grievous and ruinous disadvantages. He who permits himself to pass superficially over his studies, with the hope of finding things more easy as he proceeds, will find himself mistaken. By failing fully to understand a preceeding branch of study, he will necessarily be disqualified for the understanding of that which follows it. And the farther this process is carried, the more the embarrassments will be multiplied and aggravated. The necessary consequence will be, the student will soon grow discouraged. His studies, always laborious and perplexing, will soon become a subject of loathing and disgust; and, if not abandoned in despair, as a matter of impractical attainment, will be pursued eventually without profit and without success. Be assured, no one can ever become a thorough scholar, who allows himself to indulge in the habit of passing lightly or superficially over any part of his studies. But, on the contrary, he who strictly obeys the injunction in hand—who makes it a point to pass by nothing until well understood, will find his path become more luminous and more pleasant at every stage of his progress.— By doing well the work of to-day, he will be qualified for the work of to-morrow. By thoroughly comprehending that which goes before, he will be prepared to comprehend with ease that which follows after. His progress in time and in study, will then be a progress in knowledge and understanding. Under such circumstances, the ways of learning, like those of heavenly wisdom, he will find to be ways of pleasantness and peace. And at the end of his academical career, he will be sure of the reward, with which careful study and unwearied toil never fail to crown their votaries.

As a matter intimately connected with the foregoing, and in every case perhaps indispensable to its observance, I must be allowed to mention, in the next place, the necessity of *application*. And although it has doubtless been urged upon your attention a thousand times before, I cannot consent to let it pass without a transient remark here.

I am aware that there are some who can make respectable headway in their classes for a time, without labor and without much attention. Uncommon advantages in early education, extraordinary precocity in intellectual endowment, or perhaps superior advancement in literary attainment, may, each or all of them, contribute to this result. But whatever the cause, or whatever the advantage of this apparent fecundity of intellect, it can never be sustained long nor successfully without application. In a vast number of cases, perhaps I should not err were I to say in a majority of cases, it proves a snare to its possessor. Accustomed to rely on his well-known tact in mastering the difficulties of study, he is prone to contract habits of inattention and of indolence, which, if not seasonably arrested, must prove greatly disastrous in the end. Hence it has often happened, that those whose career at the outset was full of un-



common promise, have been eventually left far in the rear by those who were considered vastly their inferiors.

Of this, my young friends, you may rest assured ;—there is no such thing as enduring success in study—there is no such thing as thorough scholarship—there is no such thing as eminence in any department of literature—without habitual and laborious application. Individuals, like blazing meteors, have sometimes attracted the public gaze for a season, by the mere brilliance of their talents, without labor and without study, but like meteors they have soon ceased to be seen. All who have ever arrived at eminence, whether in the arts, or in the learned professions, or in the humbler and more useful walks of life, have marked their way thither by assiduous and persevering industry. On this point let no one deceive himself. Let no one presume to hope for distinction without an application which feels no weariness, which knows no cessation.

It is not to be inferred, however, from the unmeasured and unqualified terms in which I have insisted on the necessity of application, that I am disposed to allow no space for *relaxation*. The truth is, the latter is as indispensable as the former. The mind is as easily fatigued, and as certain of exhaustion, by incessant effort, as is the body. And I have not a doubt that a person may as effectually defeat his object by an application too intense, as by an application too feeble and unsteady.

There are probably few students who have not observed, on resuming their studies, the admirable effects of a protracted season of relaxation.—At such time the mind was like the body of a strong man prepared to run a race. Every power was nerved and stimulated for action. The contents of books were devoured with an avidity like that with which a hungry man devours his food. And, to continue the figure, the most difficult points in study were digested with an ease and efficiency resembling that with which the organs of nature overcome the severest crudities of nutriment. Every thing was made to give place to study ; and application, unceasing application, became the order of the day.

They who have observed this, however, have not failed to observe more. They have observed, that, in process of time—in the space perhaps of a few months—their circumstances become vastly changed.—They have observed that, instead of a relish for study, there was satiety ; and instead of mental elasticity, there were weakness and obtuseness.—The smallest difficulties in study became serious obstacles ; and application was found to be a drudgery and a task.

Now, the cause of all this is to be found in over strained effort—in the want of an application seasonably relieved by repose and recreation. As the organs of the stomach are soon impaired by too much food—as the functions of the physical system are soon worn out by too much labor—so the powers of the mind are soon broken down by too close application to study. The appropriate remedy in each case, is equally obvious and equally certain. Let the cause be removed and the effect will cease. Let

the laboring man take repose, and exhausted nature will revive. Let the worn out student cease from his books, and the prostrate energies of his mind will soon become erect.

The evil of which I speak may be easily avoided by proper discretion at the outset. Let relaxation—not actual repose, so much as corporeal exercise—be blended with study in due proportions from the commencement, and all will be well. Let the student take his recreation as certainly and as regularly as he takes his food, or his night's rest, and the exercises of the study will only increase the activity of his mind, and impart a keener zest for the acquisition of knowledge.

I have intimated that the recreation required is exercise of body rather than repose—rather than a simple cessation from study. I have no time to enter upon the reason of this; and if I had, it would probably be of but little consequence. This much however I may say—that my own experience and observation fully warrant the conviction, that two hours of corporeal exercise, which requires the attention and co-operation of the mind, are of more value to the student than double the time spent in listless inactivity. And I am the more confident in the statement of this belief, because I am assured that it will be fully sustained by those who have made the experiment for themselves.

It is to this principle that our *manual labor seminaries* are indebted for their peculiar excellence and utility. Those seasons of relaxation, which, in ordinary schools, the industrious student will devote to his books, and which the more indolent will spend in idleness, all are here compelled to employ in the field or in the workshop. Neither the kind nor the quantity of the student's recreation is left to his own discretion. Every thing of this sort is as much a matter of regulation and of obligation, as the period and character of his studies. And if the laws prescribing the duties of this department are founded in wisdom, as they may be, and of course ought to be, it is easy to see that institutions of this description possess advantages, and claims to philosophical adaptation, to which no other seminaries can make pretensions.

It has been objected to seminaries of the description of which I now speak, that they necessarily draw the mind of the student away from study. This is readily admitted. And this, I must add, is one of the principal advantages of the system. As has been intimated, the mind requires relief no less than the body. And accordingly that relaxation, be it of what kind it may, which does not withdraw the mind from the routine of study, and give a fresh and agreeable turn to the thoughts, will do but little good. The mind of a devoted student will as naturally and as inevitably return to the object of pursuit, as the magnetic needle turns to the pole. His books may be closed and out of view, but his thoughts, unless otherwise engaged, will be with them. And if his thoughts be with his books, and poring upon the subject of study, he might about as well be at his desk. His faculties will obtain but little relief; and when he resumes

his studies, it will be with the same dullness and obtuseness with which he laid them down.

If this be correct, it must follow that that kind of recreation which most effectually attracts the thoughts from the matter of studious exercise, for the time being, will always be found to answer its purpose best. And if it be true, as the objection supposes, and as I believe it is, that the exercise of manual labor does have this tendency, then, this fact affords proof that it answers well its end; and that, instead of being regarded in the light of an objection, it should be set down as a matter of high and peculiar commendation.

It has been often observed by those who have philosophised on the subject, that, to preserve a healthy and pleasant action in the system, a due equilibrium should be maintained between the exercise of the mind and that of the body. That is, that in all cases where the mind is exercised severely, there should be a corresponding severity in the exercise of the body. If this be true—and that it is I can see no reason to doubt—then it follows that the very hardships which are experienced in our manual labour schools, are to be enumerated among their greatest advantages: and not only so, but as advantages peculiar to seminaries of this description alone. Where, allow me to inquire, can you find the severe, the manly, the invigorating exercise, in all the walks of science and of literature, which is provided for in seminaries of the kind of which I now treat? And what, I must be permitted to ask further—is there to be found in all the gentle amusements to be witnessed on college greens, and in academic groves, which can compare with the manly, refreshing, renovating exercise to be found in these fields? Were I required to give proof that there is truth in this suggestion, I would appeal to the ruddy complexions, and the athlectic forms of those whom I address. And might I not add—I would appeal to the literary exercises habitually witnessed in these halls?

There is also another instrumentality which may be regarded as an auxiliary to successful effort in the acquisition of knowledge, which, on an occasion like this, ought not to be passed over in silence. I refer to *emulation*—to that principle of honorable competition, founded in a desire to excel, which is common to all classes of men, and which constitutes one of the strongest incentives to human action.

I am aware that in this day of ultra improvement—of sublimation in morals and religion more particularly—an attempt has been made to discard emulation, as a principle of unhallowed influence, which is incompatible with good morals, and wholly unworthy of a place in seminaries of learning. That this principle is frequently abused—that it is often carried to extremes—that it is sometimes allowed to lay the foundation of jealousies, animosities, feuds, and bitter revales, is not to be doubted. But what principle, I would ask, or what policy, is not capable of abuse? Most unquestionably, if the fact that a principle is capable of

being carried to extremes, and is thereby sometimes rendered productive of unhappy consequences, is to be received as proof of its evil character and tendency, it is difficult to tell what good or useful thing is known among us, which may not, and which must not be condemned on the same ground.

That honorable emulation is consistent, not with sound morals only, but with the temper and disposition of the christian religion also, is conclusively obvious from the well-known precept of the apostle—"Covet earnestly the best gifts"—that is, strive to excel your brethren, in the attainment of useful and honorable acquirements. That this principle is very frequently received and acted on without disturbing the foundations or cooling the ardor of private friendship, no one will deny. That it is a principle constantly operating and generally allowed and encouraged in all the different relations and departments of life, is equally beyond the reach of a doubt. That it is a principle deeply laid in the original constitution of man, will be questioned, it is thought, by few, if by any. And that it is, in a great measure, indispensable to the highest interests of human society, is perhaps not less obvious or certain. Why then, I ask, should a principle be banished from our schools, which is allowed and practised every where else, the utility of which is universally acknowledged, and the morality of which is established by the highest possible authority?

But while I commend the principle of honorable emulation—while I say to you as the apostle said to the Corinthians, "Covet earnestly the best gifts"—zealously contend for the highest attainments—I must be permitted to add a word of caution. It is this: Contend fairly, honorably, charitably. Allow no place to those envyings, jealousies, and wranglings which can exist only in a morbid disposition, which are wholly unworthy of the halls of science, and which have no necessary or proper connexion with manly competition. And above all, never resort to artifice, nor to any unfair or unmanly means to secure an advantage. Recollect that every one has an equal right to excel if he can, and that he who fairly and honorably outdoes you, is entitled to your respect and good-will—not your envy and hostility.

These last remarks apply no less to *societies* than to individuals.—Literary associations, formed to rival each other in scientific attainment, have been long in use, and their advantages have been long known and acknowledged. The principle on which they are made to operate, and to which they are mainly indebted for their utility, is the very principle which I have commended—the principle of honorable emulation. Such are the Societies which I have the pleasure on the present occasion to address. Will you then permit me to repeat to you, in your associated capacity, what I have just spoken to you as individuals? In all your contests for literary pre-eminence, avoid every thing that is little, low, or mean; every thing that has an aspect of cunning or craft; every thing that savors

of a disposition to take undue advantage; and every thing tending to the formation of unholy or unfriendly affections. On the contrary, let all your contests be distinguished by the fairness, the generosity, the magnanimity of ancient chivalry; and let all your intercourse, whether private or official, be marked by the courtesy and kindness of gentlemen and christians.

There is one other topic, though last in order, by no means least in importance, to which I must be permitted to call your attention—I allude to the *christian religion*.

I am aware that an impression extensively prevails that the religion of the New Testament is adapted only to the unenlightened and the weak-minded. And it is much to be regretted that this opinion is extensively cherished in seminaries of learning. Young men, but little more acquainted with the religion of Christ, than with that of the false prophet, are apt to think that they can display their erudition, their strength of mind, and their freedom and independence of thought, by speaking disrespectfully of the Bible. And hence the stale calumnies of Hume, Voltaire, and others of the same school, are often repeated with as much confidence as though they had never been refuted, and with as much complacency as if they constituted the very climax of literary pre-eminence.

This is no place to enter upon an argument on the subject; and if it were, my present limits would not permit. I must be allowed to say, however, that of all the pedants I have ever seen or known, an infidel pedant is the most pitiful and the most disgusting. A young man, a mere boy, just entering the field of knowledge, whose views on all subjects are necessarily crude and imperfect, and yet presuming to decide where hoary headed wisdom has been silent, and to condemn where such men as Locke and Newton have approved, is an object which no man of reflection can contemplate without emotions of pity and indignation. If angels ever weep, it appears to me, it must be when they witness an object like this.

Should I happen to be addressing, on the present occasion, any at all given to scepticism, my earnest advice to such would be this: Suspend your opinion on the spot; and before you proceed to form another conclusion, or even another thought, unfavorable to christianity, make yourself master of the subject. Study the scriptures—their origin, their history, their unity, their harmony, their prophecies, their miracles, their doctrines, their moral precepts, their high and holy purposes, and above all, their wonderful adaptation to the ends proposed. Examine impartially what has been written in their defence, as well as what has been written against them. Consider well the character of their opposers—their morals, their learning, their reputation, their value to mankind, and above all their deportment in the hour of death; and with these contrast, in the same respects, the character of those who have been their advocates and adherents. And when you can be sure that you comprehend the whole ground—that you are fully master of the entire subject—if you can be satisfied that the

evidence in favor of Christianity is indeed unworthy of confidence, then, reject it—but not till then. Any decision against the gospel short of this, must be pronounced, and will be pronounced by every man of candor and discernment, as unreasonable—as inconsistent with the dictates of philosophy and common sense—as it must be perilous and profane.

It should be distinctly understood, however, that the duty now recommended, is not a mere matter of speculation—a mere question of science—which may be settled or left unsettled without advantage and without peril. On the contrary, it is a question of life and salvation—and upon your decision respecting it, depend the joys or sorrows of the world to come. It is indeed a question in relation to which no man can be indifferent or undecided with impunity. It is one in regard to which all neutrality is clearly out of the question. Not to believe here is to disbelieve; and not to receive is to reject. And to disbelieve and reject, is to set aside the only means of deliverance, and to incur the full weight of divine indignation and wrath.

If these remarks be correct—and that they are I am sure there is no room for a doubt—then the subject of religion claims your first, your most earnest and solemn attention. If it be true that the soul is of more importance than the body, and that the interests of eternity are of more fearful magnitude than those of time, then whatever relates to these, must unquestionably demand the earliest and most active attention. And if it be true, as it undeniably is, that every hour's delay connected with this point, is necessarily attended with uncertainty and peril, it is easy to see that there is not a moment to be lost. He who delays or procrastinates here, does it at the enormous hazard of life and immortality. The only safety which the case can admit, is to be found in prompt and decisive action—in an immediate submission to the demands of the gospel—an unreserved surrender to the king of saints.

May I be indulged while I expatiate on this point a moment longer?—I regard the matter as vastly momentous, and am therefore unwilling to pass it over with a single remark. My appeal is to your understandings and your hearts. Who is there in this assembly, who does not know, and who will not promptly and freely admit, that there are at least ninety-nine probabilities to one, that of those who are now members of this Institute, there are some who will never reach the age of manhood? If this be admitted, then the question must arise with the most solemn and exciting interest—Who is to form the exception? Of the blooming youth whom I now address, who is he whom death has marked as an early prey—who is even now treading on the confines of the grave, and whose joyous hopes and glowing anticipations are destined to be so soon extinct for ever? This is a question which none can solve but him who holds the keys of death and the grave. And it is this circumstance—this fearful uncertainty—which brings the inquiry home to every one's door—to every one's heart. No one can throw aside the dreadful liability and

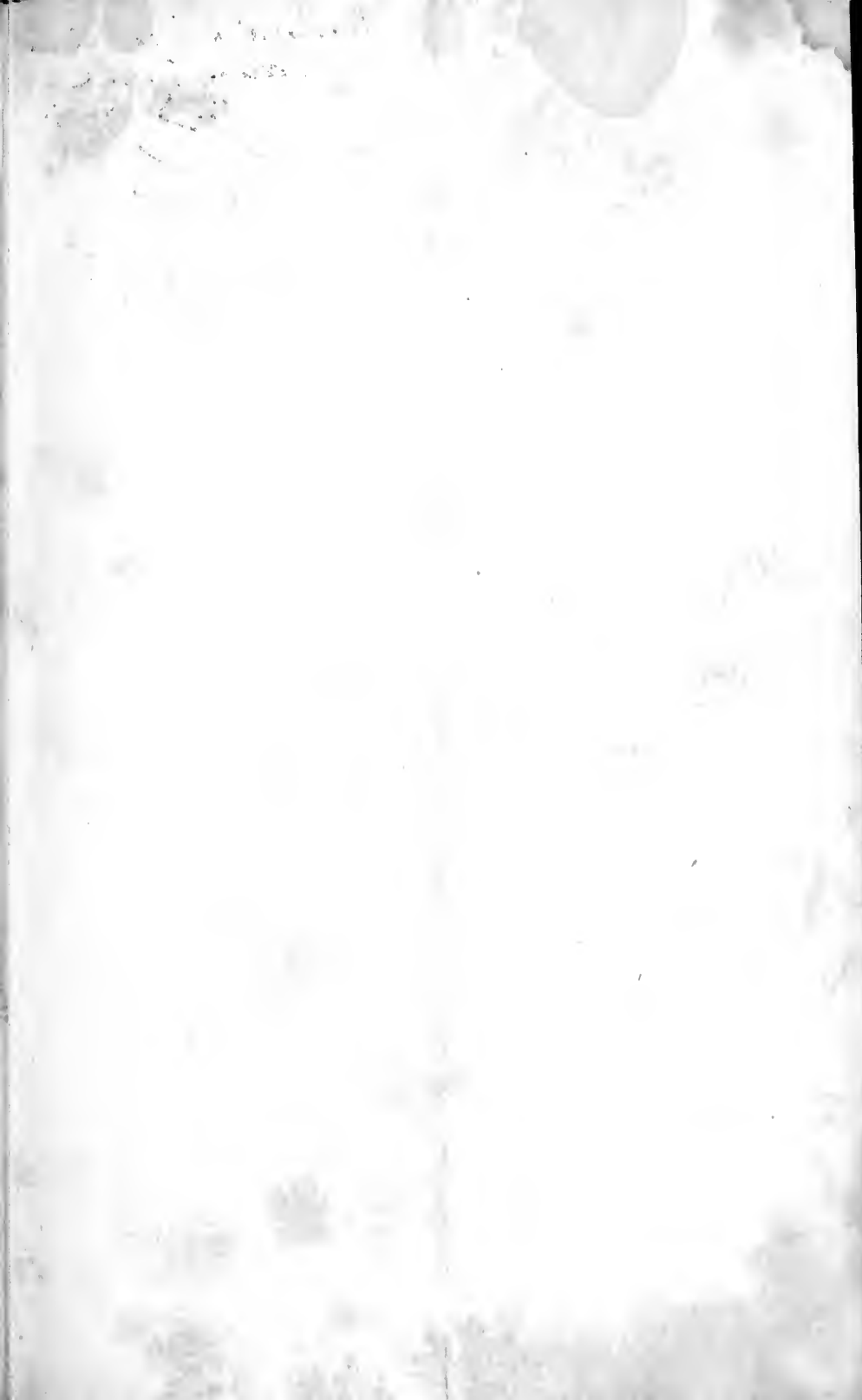
say—I am not the person. For ought that men or angels know, it may be *you*—it may be *you*—it may be *you*. Here, then, is the consideration—solemn and impressive and startling as the grave—which shows the necessity for immediate and effectual action—for an instantaneous preparation for death, and for all the momentous exigences which must ensue. And here, too, is the consideration—as religion is allowed to be the only sure preparative for a future state—here is the consideration which demonstrates the necessity of immediate reconciliation to God, the Redeemer and Savior of the world. As you value your peace in your last hour, therefore ; as you value your safety and well-being in a future world ; as you appreciate the everlasting friendship and favor of Heaven ; and as you deprecate the unending and incomprehensible woes of the finally impenitent, beware how you disregard this momentous lesson of philosophy, of experience, and of common sense.


But, perhaps, you are ready to inquire—What has all this to do with the matter in hand ? What has the christian religion to do with the prosecution of successful study in the acquirement of a literary education ? I answer—Much every way. Religion lies at the foundation of every interest of man, and should accordingly distinguish and influence and direct his first steps in every pursuit.—“Seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness,” said infinite wisdom personified, “and all these things shall be added”—that is, all subordinate interests shall thereby be promoted and secured. So strongly impressed with this principle—that is the principle of religious influence—have mankind ever been, that, however sunk in barbarism, ignorance, and crime, all important undertakings were habitually commenced by solemn acts of religion—by offerings made the Gods with a view of propitiating that power supreme, which their reason told them was indispensable to the success of their undertakings.—“Because thou hast asked this thing,” said Jehovah to the youthful king of Israel, “and has not asked for thyself long life ; neither hast asked riches for thyself, nor hast asked the life of thy enemies : but hast asked for thyself understanding to discern judgement ; behold I have done according to thy words : lo, I have given thee a wise and an understanding heart ; so that there was none like unto thee before thee, neither after thee shall any arise like unto thee.” 1 Kings 3. 4. I cannot, I need not enlarge. Those whom I address, I am persuaded, can be at no loss to see how intimately connected must be the love and fear and obedience of God—the sole arbiter and disposer of human destiny—with all the interests of man, both temporal and eternal.

Having occupied the full extent of my claims upon your attention, I must here conclude my discussion. In view of the whole, let no one despond—let no one be cast down nor discouraged, because his talents seem less promising than those of others. On the contrary, let him take courage from the experience of multitudes ; and remembering that what man has done man may do again, let him gird himself afresh, and ply

his labor with augmented vigor. Disdaining an imperfect and superficial knowledge of things, what he learns let him learn well. Let his application be unwearied, but let it be judiciously tempered with seasonable and appropriate relaxation. Stimulated by an honorable and commendable ambition, let him fix his mark high on the roll of pre-eminence, and let him never faint nor falter until he shall attain it. But above all, let him not forget that man is born to die, that on earth there is no continuing city, that there can be no abiding happiness where there is not virtue, and that there is no salvation for the guilty but by faith in the blood of the Covenant.





Richard E Weston Esq  
College Hill  




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